

to the capitalist mode of production (Marx,1978:596)

The fact that both the Rothschilds and the Sursuks operated successful enterprises based on share-cropping was itself an indication that a large number of peasants were becoming less self sufficient and more dependent on other landowners. It in fact meant that the peasants were undergoing a process of de peasantisation. In a share-cropping system, the more production is market oriented and consequently the higher the forces of production employed, the more advanced production relations will be. Speaking of this system as a progressive force toward capitalist change, Marx observes:

Only where and when the other prerequisites of capitalist production are present does usury become one of the means assisting in the establishment of the new mode of production by ruining the feudal lord and small scale producer, on the one hand, and centralizing the conditions of labour into capital, on the other. (Marx, C.III, pp.596-97)

The dynamics of the share-cropping system in the Maritime Plain provides proof of the leading role of this system in the transformation process. Agricultural production in the Maritime Plain depended heavily on machinery and intensive capital investment. Until the late 1880s, grapes were the major crop produced in the Rothschilds' settlements. Up-to-date wineries were established in the settlements of Zikhron Yaa'kov and Rishon Li Zion and high quality wine was exported throughout Europe (Giladi,D.,1975:185). However, as a result of overproduction and the competition posed by French wine, production in Palestine declined, giving place to citrus culture.

The Rothschilds imported various kinds of citrus seeds from Europe, such as grapefruits and mandarins, and improved lemon production. New techniques of packing and shipping were also introduced, resulting in increasing quality of the produce. By 1890, citrus became Palestine's